

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A control communication method includes synchronizing a timing in a central earth station and a plurality of remote earth stations such that a predetermined control time period having a plurality of time slots is synchronized among the central earth station and the remote earth stations. The control time period is not longer than a substantially real-time response time period for the remote stations. This method further includes: initiating from a respective remote earth station, and completing, a transmission of control information through a satellite to the central earth station only during one or more of the time slots assigned to the respective remote earth station; receiving the transmission at the central earth station; and sending from the central earth station a separate transmission of data through the satellite to the remote earth station. A satellite communication system includes: an information resource providing a high bandwidth transmission; a satellite; a central earth station; and a remote earth station to transmit control information on a first transmission path through the satellite to the central earth station only during a time slot assigned to the remote earth station. The central earth station is

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5 connected to the information resource to receive the high bandwidth transmission and to communicate the transmission on a different transmission path through the satellite to the remote earth station in response to the control information from the remote earth station. The return data
10 path from the remote earth station to the central earth station is on a second transmission path as distinguished from the first transmission path on which the control information is sent.

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